THE MADRAS LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

Thursday, 26th March 1953.

The House met in the Assembly Chamber, Government Estate, Mount Road, at half-past eight of the clock, Mr. Speaker (THE HON. SRI J. SIVASHANMUGAM PILLAI) in the Chair.

MR. SPEAKER :—" Before we commence our work, I wish to congratulate the Andhra Members, on their success in their efforts to get an Andhra State. I wish them all success. One hundred and forty-one Members of this Assembly will secede and form the legislature of the new State. Of these 141 Members, we have one Member who is known as the Father of this House and he is Mr. Koti Reddi. Mr. Shanmugam and Mr. Pillalamarri Venkateswarlu were with us in the last Assembly also.

" This will be the last session. But we are going to have another meeting probably next month, to discuss the proposals about the Andhra State."

SRI VAVILALA GOPALAKRISHNAIAH :—" Because the Andhra State is going to be formed, we are going to speak in English from to-day onwards." (Cheers.)

I.—QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

SRI K. KRISHNA RAO :—" In the matter of questions and answers, it looks as though this Assembly is not sovereign and that the Ministry alone is sovereign. The Constitution says that this country is a people's sovereign republic."

MR. SPEAKER :—" The hon. Member has not raised any point of order or any such thing. What is it that he wants to know? "

THE HON. SRI C. RAJAGOPALACHARI :—" Is it a half-hour debate on the statement made by the Hon. Speaker? "

SRI K. KRISHNA RAO :—" I rise on a point of order to raise the following points :—

(1) The Ministry has no right to say that it will not answer short notice questions.

(2) The Ministry has no right to delay answers to questions beyond a reasonable limit.

(3) The Ministry has no right to say that it will not answer particular questions in the public interest.

" This Assembly is sovereign and the Cabinet is responsible to us. It is not as though the Cabinet is the overall sovereign body. Any rules which have been made previously regarding the business of this Assembly must be within the limits laid down by the Constitution. The Constitution guarantees to us the right to get

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answers and it is not open to the Ministers to say that they will not answer any particular question or that they will answer it at their own will, and this right overrides the rights of this Assembly.''

MR. SPEAKER :—'' Sri Krishna Rao first began to speak without stating his point of order. This is a bad practice, and I hope he will not repeat this in the Andhra State Assembly.

'' Apart from that, I do not want to defend the Ministers. I, however, wish to point out that they have a right to say that they cannot answer particular questions in the public interest. They have also got the right to waive or not to waive the usual period of notice prescribed for questions.''

THE HON. SRI C. RAJAGOPALACHARI :—'' I may say that short notice questions are being answered and will be answered at once wherever possible. It is only when information has got to be obtained, we have to wait till the receipt of the information.''

SRI C. V. K. RAO :—'' Sir, you were good enough to say that you were not going to defend the Ministers. I am very glad to note that. But I request you to defend the rights of Members when these rights are being trampled upon.''

MR. SPEAKER :—'' Nobody is trampling on the rights of Members.

'' This is the question hour, and this is not the time for us to discuss about short notice questions. If hon. Members have got any grievance, let them move a cut motion during the budget session and ventilate their grievance. That is the proper course. Now we are going to have the Supplementary Budget, and let them move a cut motion and discuss the matter.''

SRI K. C. GOPALAN UNNI :—'' Are the Ministers entitled to give a wrong answer? ''

MR. SPEAKER :—'' The Speaker has no responsibility to see whether the answers given are correct or not.''

SRI K. C. GOPALAN UNNI :—'' I want your ruling, Sir.''

MR. SPEAKER :—'' I am not prepared to give a ruling. The Members have got a weapon in their hands. Let them move a cut motion and press it to a division.''

STARRED QUESTIONS.

Exchange of lands belonging to Mouna Mutt, Tiruchirappalli.

* 166 *Q.*—SRI M. KALYANASUNDARAM : Will the Hon. the Minister for Religious Endowments be pleased to state whether the Government sanctioned the exchange of any land or building site belonging to the Mouna Mutt, Rock Fort, Tiruchirappalli, in favour of certain individuals and if so, on what grounds and subject to what terms?

THE HON. SRI K. VENKATASWAMI NAIDU :—'' The Government have not sanctioned the exchange of any land